

Gunnersbury Park Leisure Facility Public Consultation

Frequently Asked Questions document

Version 2

Introduction

This document has been developed to address the frequently asked questions and key topic areas that have been raised during the project to date. It is intended to be used as an information tool and will be updated throughout the course of the project as part of the on-going communication with stakeholders.

31st March 2015

Number of attendees: 21

1. *Tennis Courts – why are there plans to relocate these instead of repairing them?*

- a. The Gunnersbury 2026 Master Plan, adopted by both councils has always sought to relocate the tennis courts to ensure that the historic views and setting of the Heritage Core of the park, is reinstated to its former glory. In addition to enhancing the usage and opportunities for participation for residents, this type of facility in a park requires floodlights, which again would not be appropriate within their current area of the park, as they wouldn't be compliant with the conditions of Heritage grants secured to date.

2. *Leisure Facility Costs – what is the difference between proposed Option 1 and Option 2?*

- a. The main difference between the two options is the inclusion of the sports Hall and the additional changing and ancillary facilities required to support the sports hall, such as toilets. Both boroughs have a deficit of Sports Hall provision and the opportunities created through having a sports hall (documented in the Community Development Programme) will bring significant benefits to borough residents through the provision of, formal sport, leisure participation and public health programmes.

3. *Total cost of each option: Option 1 and Option 2 – which elements does this cover?*

- a. Slide 12 of the presentation included the following table and proposed facility mix, as per both boroughs approved cabinet reports

Option 1 – minus sports Hall and Studio	Option 2 – Including Sports Hall and Studio
Total Cost £5,004,772	Total Cost £8,689,180
New build changing block including changing accommodation,	New build sports centre including changing accommodation,
toilets, café social area and office	toilets, café social area, office, 2 classrooms
8 full size grass football pitches	5 court sports hall
3 adult cricket pitches	8 full size grass football pitches
2 full size 3G AGP	3 adult cricket pitches
8 outdoor floodlit macadam tennis courts	2 full size 3G AGP
	8 outdoor floodlit macadam tennis courts

4. *Bowling club - should there be any concerns with proposed location of the bowling club?*

- a. The location of the bowls club and its green is seen as a positive to the scheme in terms of development of the club, membership and participation. For example use of the sports hall for indoor short matt bowls and general increase in footfall to the site. The councils have met with the bowls club committee and will continue to work together in developing these proposals. With regards to sunlight and shading, the council have completed shading modelling, which shows no impact during the bowls season, with shadowing occurring during December and January. The design will also take into account the need for wind and other factors, such as the reduction of the Leylandii behind the bowls club, so that the green is not affected.

5. *Hard courts – what age ranges are catered for and what encouragement will be there for sports for older people?*

- a. The project team have consulted with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) on the facility mix, as both the National Governing Body (NGB) and potential grant funders. They have recommended tarmac macadam (hard courts) as being the most suitable. Following the consultation and raising of this question, we went back to the LTA again and were informed

‘Given the likely volume of usage and nature of play, alongside cost implications and maintenance scheduling, a porous tar macadam (hard court) surface would be advisable. Construction and maintenance wise, it

is the most cost efficient, whilst it provides good playing characteristics, drainage and longevity'.

6. Can anything be done regarding location of football pitches as some residents are unhappy about the current proposed location?

- a. Yes; we have taken on board this concern and are meeting with the NGB's for the sports requiring use of the natural turf pitches to discuss the location of the pitches. The site is a large site and accommodation of the mini soccer pitches should be possible in an alternative location

7. Why is the proposed location of football pitches in the area that is on a slope?

- a. The project team have carried out a full topographical survey of the site, to ensure that the location of the pitches, and the fall on the pitches, is in accordance with the NGB technical guidance documents. Whilst the site has a fall of circa 16m across its entirety, it is in effect two large plateaus, which the pitches have been designed to fit around; however, with the answer to question two, the site is large and variations can be looked at during the detailed technical design stages

8. Why can't football pitches stay in lower area?

- a. Please refer to answer 6 & 7 in relation to the ability to spread out the pitches. The recent feedback on the most suitable activity to go in that location was for the golf, which it was felt was potentially less of an impact to the ecologically sensitive area of the Potomac. However, recently commissioned surveys to look at the ecology and Bats, for example, should provide a further steer.

9. What are the proposals for floodlighting on the site and which facilities will be floodlit?

- a. The proposals are the AstroTurf Grass Pitches (AGP's) will be floodlit, along with the tennis courts on the site. This is requirement of Brentford Football Club Football in the community, as well as National Governing Bodies. Without floodlight there would be a heavy restriction on the recognised level of sport which could be played at the sites facilities.

10. Light pollution – has this been considered with floodlight pitches?

- a. Light pollution has been considered with regards to the location and any light spillage which may affect residents. As a result the current location has been selected as it has the least impact to the wider site and to ecology. The technology for floodlights has improved significantly in recent

years, and there are many recent examples of floodlights being approved in more densely populated areas, such as Spikes Bridge Park, Lord Halsbury Playing Fields, Pitshanger Park Tennis courts, to name a few and we would encourage people with concerns to visit these sites to give them an understand of the effects floodlighting has. The floodlighting will of course be subject to planning and a full light impact assessment will be required as part of the planning application. In addition we would like to reassure residents that we will ensure we opt for the best technology available in order to mitigate and impact as much as is possible.

11. Will there be fences around artificial surfaces and tennis courts?

- a. Yes there will be fencing around the AGP's and the Tennis Courts

12. What security will be in the park, will there be any CCTV?

- a. The facility will have a full CCTV system as part of its design, which will also allow for external areas. There will also be facility management on-site during operating hours.

13. On a previous plan the public right of way was different, why has this changed?

- a. The plans are not proposing to change any rights of way that may or may not exist on the site. Local knowledge and the pedestrian movement surveys have been very helpful in showing desire lines within the park, and these will be taken into account with regards to the natural grass pitches. It is important to note that none of the grass pitches will be fenced and the sports pitch area, which has had up to 30 football pitches on it, will continue to be used as it has over the years. Free flow of movement will continue throughout the park and no existing official access points will be blocked.

14. Public path – how will people get round in the park?

- a. As per above the pedestrian movement surveys have been very helpful and the landscape architect, responsible for the Heritage Project, is the principle landscape architect for this element, to ensure consistency

15. Car park – will the car park stay free of charge?

- a. The site, for all phases of the master plan, does require improvements to car parking provision and additional spaces to be made available. The councils are considering using part of the Walled Garden, occupied by Greenscene, however this is currently outside of the funding of both the Heritage and Sports Phases. This location does currently have an income

value of circa £35k, which is built into the revised business model for the whole estate. This revised model is to ensure the site is fully funded and able to be maintained to a high standard following the significant investment; therefore options will need to be considered to mitigate any loss of income, should the car park expansion proceed. This may include a charging policy, but this could be linked to the events pricing, i.e. incorporated into the wedding hire fee, a Gunnorsbury Park Membership, similar to the National Trust, where by members park for free or peak time charging etc. therefore Officers will be exploring a range of options and will release details in due course.

16. Entrance to the park - what will be done about safety - as the existing location of the entrance is narrow and dangerous?

- a. A transport assessment has been commissioned and will advise on options for pedestrian and vehicle movement within the existing entrance. Given the restrictions on width, residential and listed boundaries, a solution will be required within the existing boundary of the entrance.

17. Will there be cycling routes in the park?

- a. There are plans to investigate cycle paths in the park, however this is as part of Hounslow's cycling strategy and connectivity of new and existing cycle routes around the site. These do not form part of the sports project plans.

18. Will the drainage outside bowling green be improved?

- a. Improved landscaping and works to the hard landscaped areas, such as car parks and footpaths, will be included as part of the project, so yes there will be improvements across the site.

19. Will there be provision for cycle parking in new facilities?

- a. Yes there will be provision for cycle parking in accordance with Hounslow's Planning Policy

20. In the 1st lottery scheme there was no car park and aim was for people to come to see the park. In this 2nd scheme there is a high level of concentration of facilities with encouragement to include car park. Why are these two schemes so different?

- a. Works and provision for additional car parking fell outside of the Heritage phase of the project, due to the funding opportunities. It was noted during the development of the Heritage Project that parking improvements were needed at the site, given the predicted increase in visitors from circa 600K to 1 million. Car parking has always been planned to be improved as part

of the full 2026 Master plan; the development of the sports phase of the project, has presented the opportunity to look at the usage of the walled garden area.

21. What is planned for evening use of the park?

- a. Subject to planning, the proposed hours of usage for the sports facilities will be up to 10 p.m.

22. Pedestrian movement and potential damage – For Brentford football fans the park is the preferred route to walk to and from Acton Town tube station. What will be done about potentially large numbers of football fans?

- a. This does sit outside of the scope of the Sports Project at Gunnersbury Park, therefore Officers will need to discuss this as part of the considerations and any proposals that have been considered as part of the Stadiums planning approval.

23. Changing facilities – can you explain practicality of proposed lockers and changing rooms?

- a. Most new built facilities for outdoor sports areas have bag stores for team events. This allows for a staggered start time of matches, so that the changing rooms can be vacated allowing another team to use them whilst the other game its proceeding. This avoids the need for large changing room spaces, which are limited in use to weekends and match days, which cost both capital and revenue funding. By simple operational arrangements these funds can be better invested. We are also proposing the installation of lockers outside of the changing rooms, as operator feedback is this is the best location, given they are visible and lockers in changing rooms can sometimes be targeted more. However, we will review the options and look to incorporate some lockable areas in the changing room provision.

24. Will the Café be fully licenced café?

- a. There is the requirement for a licensed bar, under some of the Sport League rules and regulations, principally for cricket. Therefore this does need to be explored, to see if the level of cricket at the site will progress to these higher leagues. This is a topic that we do require feedback on, as some residents have indicated that the ability to have a drink at the site on a summer's day would be attractive. Further consultation will certainly take place on this, but at present we are not proposing bar facilities.

25. What is the proposed height of the 5 courts sports hall?

-
- a. The current designs are still being finalised, but to meet with Sport England Technical guidance, the building will be approximately 9m in height

26. Sports hall – how far does shadow cast from the building?

- a. Some modelling has been completed on this and will be required as part of the planning application and we will be providing details of the initial assessment. It is important to note that the building is staggered and is not that high across the full facility.

27. Sports hall - are there any proposals to use solar panels?

- a. Yes the site will look to benefit for sustainable energy provision as much as possible.

28. What is the distance between side wall of the sports hall and bowling green?

- a. Current layouts are being finalised, but the distance would be within 10m

29. What are the plans for future of the Potomac Lake?

- a. This location forms a significant part of the Heritage Project and also the wider educational programme opportunities at the site. With particular reference to sporting and recreational activities, the councils have been discussing with Get Hooked on Fishing and other parties with regards to that type of activity. An intensive use however, would not be suitable and the site is principally a very rich and diverse site for ecology and this must be maintained as its principle use and importance to the site. We will be in close liaison with ecology colleagues on this.

22nd July Consultation event

30. Consultation

- a. As with the previous consultation event, emails were sent to core stakeholders, individuals who have registered with the Gunnersbury Website, notices in the café, press releases, Twitter announcements and local resident/community run websites. Information was also sent, as part of this well in advance of the September consultation meeting. The September meeting will be re-advertised and notices placed on park gate notice boards and heavily used areas. Reminder emails have also been sent.

31. Funding for scheme –

- a. The following funding strategy has been approved by both cabinets and works to secure funds are currently under way.

Potential funding source	Funding range £m	Comment
3 rd Party Partnership funding	1.0 – 4.0	Discussions taking place
Sport England Iconic Facilities	0.5 – 1.25	Application pending
Football Foundation	0.5	Application pending
England Cricket Board	0.4	Solicited bids
Lawn Tennis Association	0.4- 0.5	Solicited bid application pending
London Marathon Charitable Trust	0.20 – 0.25	Application pending
Ealing Council	1.25	Secured
Hounslow Council	1.25	Secured
Total potential funding	5.45 – 8.8	Allows for some contingency in event of grants not being achieved or increase in costs due to facility increase and inflation.

32. Community Interest Company (CIC) information

- a. Link to the a cabinet reports approving the setting up of a CIC below:

<http://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=85144>

33. Do the numbers stack up, will it be sustainable?

- a. A full business case and Needs Analysis document was produced and submitted to the respective cabinets as part of the decision making process. This document does show a viable operating model, which contributes income towards the overall operating costs of Gunnorsbury

Park for which the CIC will be responsible. This document does contain commercially sensitive information, in relation to revenue operating models, but a non-commercially sensitive version can and will be made available in due course

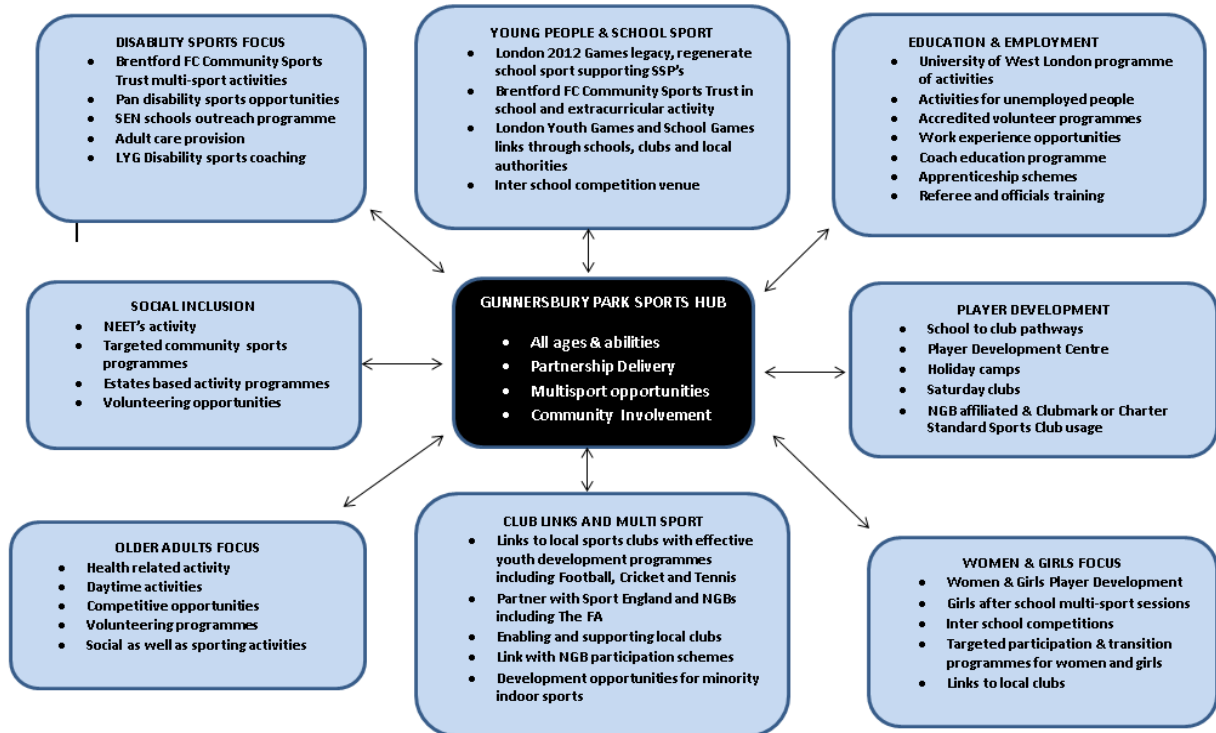
34. How can community get involved in the site –

- a. Individuals can become involved in the project in a number of ways
 - i. Attendance at Community consultation events
 - ii. Volunteering and supporting partner organisations such as Brentford Football in the Community Sports Trust
 - iii. Aid with Grant fund Raising in providing letters of support
 - iv. Registering with Gunnersbury User Volunteers Group (GUV) via <http://www.visitgunnersbury.org/get-involved/volunteer/>
 - v. Register and join the Friends of Gunnersbury Park; <http://gunnersburyfriends.org/friends/>
 - vi. Register and participate in activities as part of the Heritage Grant Applications via contacting gunnersbury@ealing.gov.uk

35. Visitors – more clarity on breakdown on visitor numbers expected for sports and culture.

- a. The project team are currently developing a Community Sports Development Programme, based upon the following core areas;

GUNNERSBURY PARK COMMUNITY SPORTS HUB SPORTS DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY OPTIONS



We are currently working with partners to devise a suitable community sports development plan which will enable us to better gauge the breakdown of visitor numbers expected. For the whole site, we are anticipating an increase from 600,000 per annum to over 1 million visitors. .

36. Car Parking –

- a. Please see the answers to question 15, 19 & 20. A full Transport Impact Assessment will accompany the planning application for people to review and comment.

37. Health Slides and Areas of Deprivation -

- a. Gunnersbury Park is a borough wide facility for both Ealing and Hounslow Council and is for all residents. It is a jewel in the crown of both boroughs and, as such, should be seen as a place for people from as far away as Feltham to visit and enjoy as much as those in Brentford/Acton. Specific maps and deprivation indices can be found within the Business Case and Needs Analysis Document produce by a Sport England Registered consultant on behalf of both boroughs, which will be released as soon as we have a non-commercially sensitive version. In the meantime the same information can be found via the following links:

http://www.ealing.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?categoryID=100004&documentID=1109&pageNumber=5&CookiesAccepted=1

http://www.hounslow.gov.uk/this_is_hounslow_2012-13_sep12.pdf

38. Costs for facilities –

- a. The aim of this project, as explained by the presentation slides, is to provide a community sport and physical activity facility, as part of the wider community assets at Gunnersbury Park, which will be run by a Community Interest Company wholly owned by both Councils (See the following link for more information as to what a CIC is)

<http://www.communitycompanies.co.uk/community-interest-companies> .

This charitable model ensures that all funds generated on the site are asset locked and must be reinvested in the site. We have a responsibility to ensure that the facilities generate income to ensure that long term they are sustainable and do not require subsidising by both councils. The business plan that has been undertaken shows a financially sustainable model that contributes to the wider business plan for the whole site.

The pricing for the hiring of the facilities will vary depending on the hirer but will be in accordance with similar facilities in the locality and the council's current pricing policy. The external grant funders, as part of their independent assessment and terms and conditions of grants, stipulate that there are affordable community rates and community access as part of the criteria and the councils are bound for up to 25 years by the terms of these grants.

39. Tennis facility and mix –

- a. Please see the answers to questions 1, 5 , 9 & 11

40. What will the new golf provision be and what size/type

- a. The councils are in discussion with the current Golf Operator, who provide a number of sites across London and beyond, in relation to the optimum golf provision. These operators are the experts in this and will be putting forward proposals for the new location. The golf proposal and provision, does not form part of this planning application, but will form part of future phases of the Gunnersbury Masterplan. We will however, as part of this application, show the proposed location for golf but planning approval for the new golf offer will not form part of this application. Following residents feedback and concerns around noise on the site, football pitches which had been located towards the North Boundary of the site, have now been swapped with the golf area which had previously sat toward the south of the site.

41. Planning and how long will there be to comment

-
- a. The planning application will be deemed a Major Application. The minimum statutory consultation period, under planning legislation is 21 days. Officers will however be requesting a minimum period of 28 days.

42. Facility- why not keep within the existing location of the pavilion etc. where it would not impact or be an 'eyesore' for residents?

- a. Residents are able to refer to the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the site should they wish to do so. This is the guiding document for developments and improvements on a heritage site and can be requested by contacting ONeills@ealing.gov.uk . Following consultation with Historic England and the Local Planning Authority, taking into account this adopted CMP document, the professional advice has been to locate the facilities in the proposed site, which also benefits from being closer to the car parking provision.

Residents will be able to see from the previous presentation slides the proposed building elevations and the location from historic views in the park etc.

43. The 2 proposals require either £5m or £8m, and the councils will look for commercial funding. How will this arrangement fit with Gunnersbury Park's covenant to provide non-commercial facilities?

- a. The funding table is provided above with the majority of the funding coming from both councils and external grant lottery funding. The facility does need to operate on a commercial basis, to ensure it is viable and does not require subsidy from the local authorities. As mentioned in question 38, the income generated is asset locked and must be reinvested the site. It is important to note that these facilities play a key role on the overall park sustainable business plan, which will ensure the site is maintained to a high standard for future generations.

44. How are you going to ensure that this building will not be leased to private enterprises and lost forever as public asset and for the use of the community? How will this be explicitly clarified in the sport hub planning application?

- a. The freehold for the site will remain with the two councils and the CIC will run the site on behalf of both councils in accordance with the articles of association of the company, the objectives of the councils, as public bodies and in accordance with the covenants on the site.

45. Who will own the building? Who will benefit of the income? Will commercial revenues be used for the benefit of the park or lost in a borough wide pot?

- a. The buildings will remain the ownership of both councils. Please review points answered in the previous questions in relation to income, asset locking and the reinvestment of funds into the park.

46. How can we ensure that the local residents will have priority in using and accessing these facilities?

- a. Gunnersbury Park is a core asset for the two boroughs and all of our residents. Both boroughs Strategic Sports Facility Plans, shows a need for facilities as indicated in the presentation. The Community Sports Development Plan, currently being developed with the various sports and national governing bodies will outline the various groups who will have the opportunity to benefit from the facilities, from both boroughs. We are working to ensure that there is something for everyone, from organised sports opportunities to physical activity, dance and /or walking. In addition to the pay and play facilities there will be free, accessible facilities for example a multi-use games area and outdoor gym.

47. Who will decide the specific role and responsibilities of the CIC trust? How would a resident be able to participate to the CIC to ensure the public interests?

- a. The council ran a fair and competitive process in the initial recruitment of Trustees, based upon a role profile being developed and evaluated on how applicants met this criteria. The appointment of directors/board members to the CIC will be advertised in due course.

48. Is there a budget for dismantling of the old sport facilities?

- a. The previous sports facilities are not listed but do have merit in their design and relationship with the site. The newer build part of the facilities will be cleared, as part of the wider Gunnersbury Master plan, for which funding needs to be secured. A future use will be explored for the retained parts of the model farm buildings, which will form a future part of the Gunnersbury 2026 Masterplan.

49. Is the current cemented parking lot plus the area currently closed to the public, nearby Chapel manor, be the only areas that will be used to create a new car parking?

- a. Please see the answer to questions 15 & 20. The current proposal to use this space is to avoid the need to provide additional parking in the wider park land, adjacent to the current car park, resulting in a loss of open space.

50. Fencing – which areas will be fenced?

- a. Pitches will not be fenced and so free movement in this area should not be a problem when games are not being played. As mentioned previously AGP's and tennis courts will be fenced in the interests of safety and

security, the plans are for them to be open for public use if they are not booked.

51. Car Parking will the planners say exactly how much green space will be concreted over for car parking in the plans?

- a. No green space will be concreted over for car parking. The plan is for the car parking to be in the existing location with additional parking created on the hard standing surface that Green Scene occupy at present. Please see previous car parking questions for more information.

52. Security provision at the site

- a. As mentioned in previous answers, the site will have full CCTV, improved lighting, staff on site for a greater number of the opening hours of the park, across the facilities and the planners will be assessing the proposals against the Secure by Design guidance within planning policies.